

*Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress;
working together is success! – Henry Ford*

MOUNTAIN COUNTIES OVERLAY AREA REGIONAL REPORT DRAFT OUTLINE

I. CURRENT STATE OF THE REGION – what makes the Mountain Counties Overlay Area unique? What are the integrated water management challenges and opportunities? Summary of conditions, including policies, activities, legislation, etc.

A. Mountain Counties Overlay Area

1. Purpose of Overlay Area
2. Purpose of this report

B. General Setting

1. Watershed topography, geology, etc.
2. General population trends in overlay area
3. Land ownership/management

C. Statewide Significance

1. Primary water source
2. Forest and watershed public benefits (“ecosystem services”)
3. Interregional connections (with the Delta and downstream users/beneficiaries)

D. Unique Characteristics of Overlay Area

1. Rural community character
2. Beneficial uses and current water usage within overlay area
3. Tribes and tribal issues

E. Unique Challenges/Drivers of Change

1. Population growth in parts of overlay area
2. Risk of catastrophic wildfire and impacts on watershed health
3. Climate Change and anticipated impacts on snowpack, timing of snowmelt, habitat, wildfires, habitat, etc., and the accompanying impacts on water storage, water quality, flood control, public safety, etc.
4. Legacy issues related to historic land use practices
5. Water rights/transfers of water out of the overlay area
6. FERC relicensings and other federal initiatives
7. Aging infrastructure and difficulties experienced by smaller water purveyors
8. Lack of clear consensus within region about certain key issues

F. Regional Needs

1. Methodology to account for actual cost of water through its lifecycle
2. Metrics to value non-structural natural fixes like meadow restoration, so they can compete successfully for funding along with traditional hard infrastructure
3. Matching funds – funding that can be used to meet federal or private matching requirements
4. Capacity to compete successfully for grants and loans
5. Better communication with State/federal agencies on existing or proposed funding programs, regulatory programs, legislation, etc.
6. Infrastructure maintenance – specific funding for aging infrastructure
7. More investment above the dams

II. HOW THE MOUNTAIN COUNTIES OVERLAY AREA FITS INTO THE STATEWIDE PICTURE – interregional relationships both historic and current, connection to downstream users, water transfers, Delta issues

A. History of water development in region

1. For in-region use
2. For out-of-region use

B. Mountain/Foothills vs. Valley issues

1. East-flowing vs. West-flowing watersheds
2. Counties, like Placer, with the majority of voters living outside of the overlay area
3. Political representation of overlay area at the State and federal levels

C. Water budget

D. Water planning and governance

1. Federal – federal land management initiatives
2. State – state land management, Governor’s initiatives such as Bioenergy Plan, Delta issues
3. Local – local General Plans, connection between land use decisions and the impacts on water quality and quantity
4. Tribal
5. Collaborative efforts

III. WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES – what are we working toward? What do we want the region want to look like/accomplish in the future, and what are the planning strategies and priorities for getting there?

A. Objectives

B. Strategies

1. What's working in region
2. What's not working in region
3. New ideas or strategies to pursue, tbd

C. Finance

1. Accomplishments with the money invested in region to date
2. Estimate of total funding need in region over next 5-10 years, and the public benefits of the work to be done
3. Potential funding programs, incentives, actions needed to achieve objectives

IV. WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT – the Resource Management Strategies (RMS) that apply to the issues identified above

A. Progress Report to date

1. Overall RMSs and how they are being used in Mountain Counties overlay region
2. Mountain Counties 2009 Regional Report Recommendations

B. What we want to focus on for next five years, in general

V. WHAT WE NEED TO BE DOING – short list of specific recommendations to improve planning, data, decision-making, etc.

A. Planning

B. Finance

C. Data/Research

D. Management

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